

# Newsletter

Dec. 2016

**VERNONIA EDUCATION  
FOUNDATION**

Vernonia School District  
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**All donations to VEF are  
tax deductible**

**catalyst**

The campaign for Vernonia's Schools

## A Message From The Chairman of the Board by Bill Langmaid

I awoke November 9<sup>th</sup> to bitter disappointment. The ballot measure authorizing the school to refinance its debt, and make some capital improvements, had failed by the action of 54 votes. This has left the school district with the message that it will need to make deep cuts in order to fulfill its obligation to those who extended construction loans during 2011 and 2012.

We do have, therefore, a renewed sense of urgency to reach out to you, alumni and friends, to help alleviate the cuts by making donations to the VEF that are earmarked specifically to pay for debt. In the past we have concentrated on raising funds for the Sports Initiative, with great success, but the immediate need is to raise \$408,000 prior to June of 2017.

At this time there has been no action to place another ballot measure before the voters, but that is sure to change. The school board chair, Superintendent Miller, and I are working on a plan moving forward to ensure that the district is fully funded and can operate without deep cuts. It is our hope that the school board will approve a bond request at their December meeting.

The failed ballot measure would have cost \$0.24 per thousand dollars of assessed value. We are asking those who would support the school, or voted yes on the bond, to consider making a donation in 2016 of this amount. Donations to the VEF are tax deductible, and at least 95% of your donation will go to repayment of the current debt.

**MARK YOUR CALENDAR**

**VEF Board Meeting:** Next Mtg. T. B. A.

**SPROUTS Mtg:** Dec. 7th 6:30 p.m. Vernonia Schools Library

*Upcoming Events*

## VEF Board of Directors

<b>Pam Weller</b> Wauna Federal Credit Union	<b>Aaron Miller</b> Vernonia School District
<b>Bill Langmaid</b> Vernonia Community	<b>Cari Levenseller</b> Vernonia School Board
<b>Ronda Smith Lennen</b> VHS Alumni Class of 1974	<b>Camrin Eyrrick</b> Vernonia Community
<b>Jim Eckland</b> VHS Alumni Class of 1962	<b>Greg Kintz</b> Vernonia School Board
<b>Marie Knight</b> Treasurer	<b>Barb Carr</b> Secretary

## VERNONIA SCHOOLS HIGHLIGHTS

By Aaron Miller

Over the summer all schools within the Vernonia School District were successful at obtaining grant funding for two very exciting programs.

At Vernonia High School teachers were successful at obtaining a \$30,000 AVID (Advancement Via Individual Determination) grant. According to the AVID website, AVID is a program that “*targets students in the academic middle—B, C, and even D students—with the desire to go to college and the willingness to work hard. Typically, they will be the first in their families to attend college, and come from groups traditionally underrepresented in higher education. These are students who are capable of completing rigorous curriculum but are falling short of their potential.*”

*AVID places these students on the college track, requiring them to enroll in the most rigorous courses that are appropriate for them, such as Honors and Advanced Placement®. To support them in the rigorous coursework, AVID students learn organizational and study skills, develop critical thinking, learn to ask probing questions, receive academic help from peers and college tutors, and participate in enrichment and motivational activities to make their college dreams reality.”*

While VHS teachers are working on AVID, elementary and middle school teachers were successful at obtaining a \$50,000+ to implement the Oregon Formative Assessment for Students and Teachers grant.

In this grant teachers are working to develop more frequent and on-going assessment strategies, and then use the information from those assessments to provide effective feedback to each student on their progress toward meeting each learning standard and learning target.



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## SPROUTS Update

By Camrin Eyrrick

Our VEF Sprouts are growing! There have been a few meetings, and the Sprouts would love to bring back Halloween costume parties in the grade school classrooms. They are holding a Halloween costume drive for next year to ensure that all kids can participate if they would like to. Sprouts are currently looking at fundraising options for this winter to help create some “seed” money in order to carry out their plans.

Sprouts will be offering the Teacher Gift Giving Tree, where certified staff will be given an ornament to write their classroom wish, valued at \$25 or less, and place it on the tree. The tree will be in the main entrance shortly after Thanksgiving break. Parents and community members will be encouraged to take an ornament wish, fulfill it, and bring it back wrapped and placed under the tree with the ornament attached.

The VEF Sprouts are also looking into bringing back the annual school Fall carnival for next year. A mini Spring school carnival may be in our future for this year! We shall see what happens!

VEF Sprouts is a new group, consisting of family and community members that want to get involved in the Vernonia Elementary students' education as well as assist teachers in their everyday needs. Think PTA, without the A.

We all have different strengths when it comes to helping our students. As a Sprouts member, the possibilities are endless as to how you can help and it's up to YOU to choose your level of involvement.

**Green Beans:** You are ready to help us climb to the top! Monthly meetings, planning and more is what you are all about!

**Sweet Tomatoes:** You are not available year round, but when we need volunteers we can pick you off the vine to help! You want to get more connected with the teachers and have one-to-one fun with children in the classroom or at events.

**The Pumpkin Patch:** You are excited about what our group is doing but you just can't commit at this time to meetings, events, and volunteering. But once or twice a year, you can 'carve out' something for Sprouts.

Call or email **Katy Dennis** with any questions (360) 472-0046  
[VEFSprouts@yahoo.com](mailto:VEFSprouts@yahoo.com)

## ALUMNI UPDATE

By Ronda Lennen

The Vernonia Education Foundation is working hard to gather addresses/contact information for Vernonia Schools Alumni. If you are still in contact with your classmates, please help us pass the word.

Get on the mailing list for information about upcoming events. Remember Vernonia's next BIGGEST Reunion will be in 2020.

Vernonia's BIGGEST Class Reunion is held every 5 years and welcomes all alumni, staff and those that attended Vernonia Schools at any given time. Send information to:

[rlennen@vernonia.k12.or.us](mailto:rlennen@vernonia.k12.or.us)